

KEY ALLIANCES IMPROVE REGIONAL SECURITY AND PROTECT CRITICAL U.S. INTERESTS

**HON. SILVESTRE REYES**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues of the critical importance of our strategic allies. While some in Congress say that the United States should focus our efforts to defend our nation on building walls and restricting entry at our borders, we must continue to address the global threat of terrorism through cooperation and coordination with our allies.

While I am sure that most everyone would agree with the general concept that nations should work together to fight terrorism, I wanted to mention two countries to give my colleagues concrete examples of the critical importance of our alliances and the need to cultivate these relationships.

Turkey has a key strategic position, controlling the Bosphorus Straits and sharing a border with Syria, Iran and Iraq. A member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Turkey has been a strong ally to the United States and to all of Europe. Turkey has proven to be an important partner as US forces have left Iraq and regional tensions have increased as the situation in Syria continues to devolve and Iran pursues nuclear technologies. Turkey's importance to the US and the world will continue to increase in the future, and Turkey will be critical to maintaining peace and stability.

At a time when the US and NATO continue to maintain a large military presence in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan is a valued partner. From providing critical access to Afghanistan to helping fight the flow of illegal drugs that fund Taliban insurgents, Azerbaijan has repeatedly proven their commitment to the fight against terrorism. As Azerbaijan continues to develop democratic institutions and a civil society, their contributions to regional and global security will increase even more. At a time when all of our alliances are being tested, the partnership between the United States and Azerbaijan remains strong.

The world is a safer place for all when we combine our efforts to fight those criminals who seek to use terror as a means to achieve their goals. When we work together, we become more than the sum of our parts. I urge my colleagues to support our nation's efforts along with those of our allies like Turkey and Azerbaijan to secure and protect our citizens

HONORING REGGIE COPELAND,  
MOBILIAN OF THE YEAR

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mobile City Council President Reggie Copeland who was recently named "Mobilian of the Year" by the Cottage Hill

Civitan Club. I cannot think of anyone in our community who is more deserving of this high honor than Reggie.

Over 70 years ago, Reggie and his family moved to Mobile. He attended Murphy High School, Spring Hill College and the University of Alabama-Mobile Campus. During his school years, Reggie was a star athlete in football, basketball and softball. And as a young man, he developed a passion for athletics that not only taught him the value of sportsmanship, but instilled in him the very best qualities of success through teamwork.

After answering his county's call in the Korean conflict, Reggie returned stateside to embark on a long journey that would take him from the basketball courts to public office. After serving as a nationally recognized collegiate basketball official for 25 years and taking the role of executive with Alabama Power Company for an equal amount of time, Reggie found even greater challenges in leading the City of Mobile.

In 1985, he was elected to the Mobile City Council and has been re-elected six times. Currently, Reggie is in his second term as President of the City Council.

Among his long and storied history of community involvement, Reggie is credited with helping establish Mobile's Junior Miss Program, known today as the Distinguished Young Woman of America, and also helped bring the Magnolia Grove Golf Course, of the world-renowned RSA/Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, to town.

He also led the construction, and later expansion, of the Copeland-Cox Tennis Center, which bears his name, and is generally considered one of the finest public municipal tennis complexes anywhere in the country.

Councilman Copeland also played a major role in helping reestablish minor league baseball in our city with the construction of Hank Aaron Stadium, home of the Mobile BayBears.

Reggie's considerable accomplishments and recognitions include former President, Mobile Jaycees; former Vice President of Alabama Jaycees; President of the TB Health Association of Mobile County; Chairman of the Mobile County Red Cross Blood Drive; Chairman, United Way Commercial Division; President of the Southeastern Conference Basketball Officials Association; President of the Port City Basketball Officials Association of Mobile; Member of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame Board; Inducted into the Amateur Softball Association Hall of Fame, Mobile; Inducted into the Spring Hill College Hall of Fame; Chairman of the Gulf Coast Athletic Conference Basketball Tournament, 1995–97; Chairman of the Little Sisters of the Poor Golf Tournament, 1995–2000; Inducted into the Mobile Sports Hall of Fame, 1999; and member of the Board of Directors-Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce.

Reggie also assisted with the Mobile Mystics Hockey franchise and is currently working to develop a world-class soccer complex in Mobile. He also played a major role in development of the Riverfront Park and the Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center.

In short, it is safe to say that there are few individuals in Mobile's rich history, which has spanned more than three centuries, who have been a more positive force for change than Mobilian of the Year Reggie Copeland.

Although Reggie recently announced his intention to retire from elected office at the end of his present term, I know him far too well to believe that he is going to slow down for even a minute. Reggie Copeland is Mobile's own version of the Energizer Bunny, and our community, our region and our entire state are better places because of his tireless efforts and unselfish example.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for all Mobilians in expressing our gratitude for Reggie's enormous dedication to making Mobile second to none. We all wish him and his fine family, including his five children and 13 grandchildren, all the best. Congratulations on this well-deserved honor.

RECOGNIZING GENEVA A. BLACK  
OF PHILADELPHIA ON THE OCCASION  
OF HER RETIREMENT

**HON. CHAKA FATTAH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the tenacious spirit, remarkable expertise and admirable accomplishments of Geneva A. Black in providing high-quality and compassionate in-home, community and center-based services for elderly and vulnerable residents in West Philadelphia.

As Ms. Black begins a richly deserved retirement as Executive Director of Haddington Multi-Services for Older Adults, Inc., where she has served our senior citizens for 41 years, it is time to reflect upon and thank this outstanding leader. In 1970 Ms. Black joined the Haddington Leadership Organization as its housing coordinator and two years later became Executive Director. At the time, Haddington had three employees. Now the renamed and expanded Haddington Multi-Services for Older Adults, Inc. has a fulltime staff of 25 and a million-dollar-plus budget.

Along the way, under Ms. Black's leadership, the Haddington organization purchased the vacant firehouse at 5500 Haverford Avenue and converted the building to a showplace center for senior activities, serving over 30,000 West Philadelphia seniors since 1975. It is only fitting that Philadelphia City Council recently named the stretch of Haverford Avenue adjoining the firehouse as "Geneva Black Way." This is where Geneva Black's way on behalf of older Philadelphians has been making a difference for decades—and that service will be her legacy into retirement.

Having her "Way" is only one of the many tributes flowing toward this remarkable leader. The Board of Directors of Haddington Multi-Services, in recognition of her valued contributions, will honor Geneva A. Black with a celebration on Friday April 27, 2012, at First District Plaza in West Philadelphia.

I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in saluting and congratulating a great Philadelphian, Geneva A. Black, and to wish her good health and long life upon her retirement as Executive Director of Haddington Multi-Services for Older Adults Inc.